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New - Home Mgt. Specialists

FACT SHEET

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Focusing On Clean Clothes . . .

SOAPS AND DETERGENTS

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Soaps and Laundry Detergents

A soap or detergent loosens the dirt from clothes and keeps it in the wash water. The all-purpose, heavy-duty kind does a good job of cleaning most clothes.

For delicate fabrics you wash by hand, you may want to use a gentler kind—like those used for washing dishes. Directions on the package will tell you the soap or detergent is safe for delicate fabrics.

If you have soft water, you may want to use soap. When you put soap in hard water, you get a soap curd. Soap curd can turn your clothes gray if it isn't rinsed out.

Some soap powders you can buy are:

- | <i>Light-duty</i> | <i>Heavy-duty</i> |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| • Ivory Flakes | • Duz (red box) |
| • Ivory Snow | • Instant Fels Naptha |
| • Lux Flakes | • Rinso |
| | • White King |

Many other brands of laundry soap also are sold.

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Detergents work well in both soft and hard water. Detergent powders are the most common, least expensive form. Detergent tablets are convenient, but may be expensive.

Liquid detergents dissolve easily in cool water. They are handy for pre-treating stains and grease spots.

Cold water detergents are made especially for washing clothes in cold water. They work in hot water, too.

Many detergents have bleach, borax or a brightener added to give more cleaning power. Some have all of these products added. Adding other products makes the detergent more expensive.

Enzymes are the newest thing in laundry products. They are for pre-soaking stains and heavily soiled clothes before washing. They are especially good for use in cold water. You can use hot or cold water to wash clothes in detergents with enzymes added.

Sudsing

Some people like lots of suds in the wash water. Others don't care much about suds as long as the clothes get clean. Too many suds may cut down on washing action and are hard to rinse out. They also may damage the machine.

Don't use high-sudsing detergents in a washing machine that opens in the front.

Low-sudsing detergents can be used in either front or top-loading machines.

Some high-sudsing detergent powders are Breeze, Cheer, Duz (blue and yellow boxes), Fab, Oxydol, Super Suds and Tide. High sudsing detergent liquids are Wisk and Dynamo.

Some low-sudsing detergent powders are Ad, All, Bold, Cold Power, Ajax and Dash. Tablets include Salvo and Vim. Cold water All is a liquid.

Heavy-duty detergents with enzymes added include products like Punch, Drive, Gain and Tide XK. Other pre-soak products that do not have detergents added are Axion, Amaze, Biz and Sure. Clothes can be soaked overnight or as long as 24 hours, then washed in detergent as usual. Many stained clothes will wash clean if they are pre-soaked in detergent and cold water as well as in any one of the pre-soak enzyme products.

Many stores carry many other brands of detergents, enzyme detergents and pre-soak products in addition to these. Choose the brand you like best.

How To Use Soaps and Detergents

- Directions on the package tell you how much soap or detergent to use in a normal size washing machine with normally soiled clothes.

- You may need to add more soap or detergent if you have an extra large machine, if your clothes are very dirty or if the water is very hard.

- Measure soap or detergent carefully. Using too much wastes money and may make so many suds that clothes don't come clean. If you don't use enough, some of the dirt may not come out.

- Detergents lose their cleaning action when the same wash water is used over and over again. Add more detergent if you need it before you put in another load of clothes.

Sometimes white clothes and linens turn gray because you haven't used enough soap or detergent or you haven't thoroughly rinsed out what you did use.

To get clothes white again:

1. Wash the clothes again in hot water. Add enough water softener to make the water feel slippery (about 1 cup).
2. See if the water gets sudsy. If it does, your clothes weren't rinsed enough. Wash them only with water softener until clothes get white. If they don't get white, add soap or detergent and repeat washing.
3. Soak in an enzyme pre-soak product following directions on the package for that particular fabric. Wash as usual in detergent or soap.

Trade names are used only to help you know what to look for. Many companies also make and sell soaps and detergents. The Texas Agricultural Extension Service does not recommend one kind more than another.

References

Soaps and Detergents for Home Laundering, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 139, December 1967.

Home Laundering: The Equipment and the Job, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Home and Garden Bulletin No. 101, October 1964.